

Data-Driven Statistical Research Team

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The SCAO statistical research team supports court efforts to assess public satisfaction, equitably allocate resources, and promote positive performance.

Annual Assessment of Public Satisfaction

Over the past three years, the vast majority of court users reported that they were treated with courtesy and respect, able to conduct their business in a timely manner, and thought that their case was handled fairly. Many citizens within the state of Michigan hear about these high levels of customer service through their local or regional media outlets.

In June, SCAO distributed the 2016 survey materials, including court-specific survey instruments and instructions, to court leaders. In August, courts will again begin to solicit feedback for five full business days from every court user leaving the courthouse.

This year, the statistical research team will work with the State Bar of Michigan to send an electronic version of the survey to attorneys throughout the state. Therefore, attorneys who come into the court will have the option to complete the survey as they leave the courthouse or from their office or home computer.

If you have any questions about the public satisfaction survey requirements for courts, please contact Kimberly Tody, SCAO Data Projects Coordinator, at todyk@courts.mi.gov.

Using Weighted Caseload to Allocate Judges

In December 2015, during the chief judge and court administrator seminar, numerous court leaders heard about how to use weighted caseload data to equitably allocate workload among judges. Sixteen courts signed up to receive more information. Nearly half of those courts worked with SCAO to generate a detailed analysis of the current workload allocation. These detailed analyses show the percentage of cases assigned to each judge and an estimate of the amount of time required in handling those cases. Court leaders use this information to balance workload, reassign quasi-judicial officers, strategically plan, and/or adjust to changes in the size of the bench.

For example, in one jurisdiction that is losing a judgeship through attrition, the court received the estimated workload for the current sitting judges and four options for reassigning cases after one judgeship is gone. The sitting judges, with leadership from the chief judge and in consultation with the regional administrator, can have informed discussions of how to reassign cases long before cases need to be reassigned. This ensures that there will be no gaps in service or case processing.

If your court would like to assess its judicial workload, contact me at hutzell@courts.mi.gov.

Judiciary Dashboard Provides Public Transparency

In June, SCAO updated the [judiciary dashboard](#). This dashboard allows the public to see what is working, or not, in the judiciary as a whole. The judiciary continues to improve in many areas, such as the following:

- **Courts are doing more to enforce financial sanctions.** Since 2010, the percentage of courts with a compliant collections program has increased from 85% to 92%. This improves courts' credibility and effectiveness.
- **More courts have the judges needed to keep up with demand.** Since 2011, the percentage of county-funded jurisdictions with a judicial need decreased from 14% to 0% and locally-funded district courts with a judicial need decreased from 7% to 2%.
- **Courts with judicial excess have been right-sized.** Since 2011, the percentage of county-funded jurisdictions with a judicial excess decreased from 52% to 30% and the percentage of locally-funded district courts with a judicial excess decreased from 20% to 5%.
- **More counties share judicial resources.** Since 2013, the percentage of counties participating in a concurrent jurisdiction plan has increased from 77% to 86%.
- **Counties are collecting and disbursing more child support.** Since 2012, the percentage of child support paid in the month due increased from 67% to 71%. This ensures minimum standards of living for children, reduces the need for public assistance, and maximizes federal incentives.
- **More cases are disposed in resolution centers.** Since 2013, the number of cases disposed by community dispute resolution centers increased from 14, 412 to 16,279. In many situations, the collaborative, voluntary approach of mediation is more appropriate than litigation.
- **More courts share a chief judge.** Since 2010, the percentage of chief judges presiding over more than one court increased from 4% to 37%. Consolidating chief judges provides strong, central leadership for courts that share jurisdictions.

If you have an idea for a performance measure that we should track on this dashboard, please contact me at hutzell@courts.mi.gov.

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